

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 48 were rejected in the Office Action of December 19, 2005. In response, Applicant amends claims 1, 11, 19, 22 and 36-38, adds new claims 49-53, and offers the following remarks. No claims have been canceled. Therefore, claims 1-53 are pending in the application.

I. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 11 was rejected under 37 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. The term “the rail” lacks antecedent basis within the claims.

In response to the indefiniteness rejection of claim 11, Applicant amends claim 11 to remove the term rail, thereby correcting the antecedent basis issue with claim 11.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

a. Claims 19-25 and 27-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by SU 1337-338.

Independent claim 19 recites, “a bearing system for a crane, the system comprising: a first bearing surface ...; a roller chain encompassing at least a segment of the first bearing surface ...; a second bearing surface ...; a third bearing surface opposed to the second bearing surface ...; and a fourth roller received between, and in rollable contact with, the second and third bearing surfaces.” SU 1337-338 does not disclose a bearing system having the recited bearing surface arrangement. For at least this reason, SU 1337-338 does not anticipate independent claim 19 or its dependent claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the anticipation rejections based on SU 1337-338 is respectfully requested.

b. Claims 19, 20, 31, 32, 34-36 and 38-41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Patent 2,512,477 to Bowes (“Bowes”).

Independent claim 19 recites, “a roller chain ... comprising: ... a first member interlinking the first and second rollers ...; and a second member pivotal relative to the first member, interlinking the second and third rollers” As can be understood from Fig. 6 of Bowes, the links 30 of Bowes, which are used to connect the rollers 29, are joined together via two bolts to form a rigid connection between the links 30. The rigid connection between the

links 30 prevents the links 30 from moving relative to each other, much less pivoting relative to each other. For at least this reason, Bowes does not anticipate independent claim 19 or its dependent claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the anticipation rejections based on Bowes is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

a. Claims 1-8, 11-35 and 39-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowes in view of U.S. Patent 4,061,230 to Goss et al. ("Goss") or in view of SU 1337-338.

Independent claim 1 recites, "a system for receiving and delivering into a base the radial loads imposed on a crane, ..., the system comprising: a plurality of rollers arranged in a linked sequence along the outer bearing surface of the center post, each roller having an axis of rotation that is generally parallel to the rotational axis of the center post; ...; and a link connecting each roller between the first and the second rollers to its adjacent rollers to form a flexible chain of said rollers," Independent claim 12 recites, "providing each roller between the first and the second rollers with a link to its adjacent rollers to form a flexible chain of said rollers;" Independent claim 19 recites, "a roller chain ... comprising: ... a first member interlinking the first and second rollers ...; and a second member pivotal relative to the first member, interlinking the second and third rollers" Independent claim 42 recites, "routing a roller chain along at least a portion of the bearing surface, said roller chain including a first end, a second end, and a plurality of flexibly interlinked rollers between the first and second ends,"

As can be understood from Fig. 6 of Bowes, the links 30 of Bowes, which are used to connect the rollers 29, are joined together via two bolts to form a rigid connection between the links 30. The rigid connection between the links 30 prevents the links 30 from moving relative to each other, much less pivoting relative to each other. In other words, the rigid connection between the links 30 of Bowes prevents Bowes from having a flexible chain of rollers 29.

Bowes, SU 1337-338, and Goss, together or individually, do not teach or suggest a reason for modifying the rigid chain of rollers 29 of Bowes to have links that are pivotal to each other or a flexible chain of rollers 29. For at least this reason, the Bowes/SU 1337-338/Goss combination does not make obvious independent claims 1, 12, 19, 42 or their respective

dependent claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejections of claims 1-8, 11-35 and 39-48 based on the Bowes/SU 1337-338/Goss combination is respectfully requested.

b. Claims 9 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowes in view of Goss or in view of SU 1337-338, as applied to claim 19, and further in view of U.S. Patent 4,446,977 to McCain ("McCain").

As discussed in the preceding section, each of the independent claims 1, 12, 19 and 42 require that the links be pivotal to each other (i.e., independent claim 19) or that the chain of rollers be flexible (i.e., independent claims 1, 12 and 42). Bowes, SU 1337-338, and Goss, together or individually, do not teach or suggest a reason for modifying the rigid chain of rollers 29 of Bowes to have links that are pivotal to each other or a flexible chain of rollers 29. McCain does not remedy this deficiency. For at least this reason, the Bowes/SU 1337-338/Goss/McCain combination does not make obvious independent claims 1, 12, 19, 42 or their respective dependent claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejections of claims 9 and 36 based on the Bowes/SU 1337-338/Goss/McCain combination is respectfully requested.

c. Claims 10 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowes in view of Goss or in view of SU 1337-338, as applied to claims 1 and 19, and further in view of U.S. Patent 4,395,160 to deJong ("deJong").

As discussed in the preceding section, each of the independent claims 1, 12, 19 and 42 require that the links be pivotal to each other (i.e., independent claim 19) or that the chain of rollers be flexible (i.e., independent claims 1, 12 and 42). Bowes, SU 1337-338, and Goss, together or individually, do not teach or suggest a reason for modifying the rigid chain of rollers 29 of Bowes to have links that are pivotal to each other or a flexible chain of rollers 29. DeJong does not remedy this deficiency. For at least this reason, the Bowes/SU 1337-338/Goss/deJong combination does not make obvious independent claims 1, 12, 19, 42 or their respective dependent claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejections of claims 10 and 37 based on the Bowes/SU 1337-338/Goss/deJong combination is respectfully requested.

IV. New Claims

Applicant adds new claims 49-53, which introduce no new matter. New claims 49-53 are supported by the application as filed, specifically FIGS. 1-7 and the portions of the specification

pertaining thereto. Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 49-53 are allowable over the art of record.

CONCLUSION

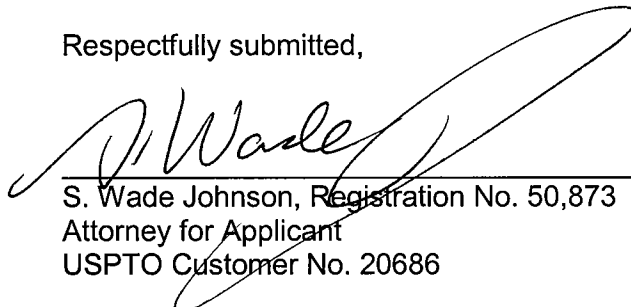
This application now stands in allowable form and reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

This Amendment is submitted contemporaneously with a petition for a two-month extension of time in accordance with 37 CFR § 1.136(a). Accordingly, please charge Deposit Account No. 04-1415 in the amount of \$1,100.00, (\$650.00 for excess claims fee and \$450.00 for two-month extension of time fee). The Applicant believes no further fees or petitions are required. However, if any such petitions or fees are necessary, please consider this a request therefor and authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 04-1415 accordingly.

If the Examiner should require any additional information or amendment, please contact the undersigned attorney.

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Respectfully submitted,



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